

Friends Meeting House
Randolph Township, Near Dover, Morris County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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Friends Meeting House
Randolph Township, Near Dover, Morris County, New Jersey

Owner: Society of Friends

Date of Erection: 1758

Architect:

Builder:

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: One with balcony

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - frame
construction

Interior walls - plaster
showing hand hewn frame

Inside brick chimneys

Roof - pitch, slate

Historical Data:

In 1740 several families of Friends settled in Randolph Township; meetings were held occasionally at their homes; they were, however, members of the Woodbridge Monthly Meeting.

Robert Schooley deeded an acre of land for four pounds current money of New Jersey to Jacob Laing and James Brotherton, as trustees, who were to hold the land in trust as a place to bury the Quakers residing in the vicinity. In 1758 the sum

of seventy-three pounds was raised and the present structure was built on this land. Up until this time the members belonged to the Monthly Meeting at Woodbridge, and now a regular meeting was established subordinate to the Woodbridge Monthly Meeting.

The building was built at odd times by the Quakers and their friends, and took the better part of the year. The beams used were of oak one foot by eighteen inches. The floors were oak and put down with wooden pegs. The whole frame, the foundation, and the benches are the same as when they were first put there. The siding and the roof are the only things that are new.

The interior fittings are of the simplest and rudest construction. The seats are of plain boards, and the shutters used to divide the sexes are two battened horizontal doors ten feet long and three feet high. Each side of the middle doorway is held in place by wooden buttons. There are traps hanging from the overhead cross-beams which swing down to meet the lower division.

In the loft the wooden benches are less pretentious than the plain ones on the ground floor, and on one side the benches are built like bleachers. In the loft floor is an opening about ten feet square. The slaves, some of them refugees, worshipped in the loft. When no slaves were present, the hole was closed to conserve heat. Originally, the building was warmed by means of a charcoal fire built in a pit beneath the floor. In 1845 a modern stove was installed.

Regular services were discontinued about 1865.

Bibliography:

The information for this history was obtained from Charles Brotherton, Randolph Township, a trustee of this property and a descendant of James Brotherton, one of the original trustees who purchased the land in 1752.

Walter E. Rutt

Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams

SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, A.I.A.
District Officer

Rev. Jan. 25 '31 TFW.